

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 02895 110339Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /018 W
-----112234Z 000166 /73

R 102124Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5935
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUATEMALA 2895

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GT
SUBJ: THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SONS

1. WITH THE RETURN OF COL. ENRIQUE PERALTA MAY 8 FROM ELEVEN YEARS OF SELF-IMPOSED EXILE IN MIAMI, GUATEMALA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ITS HISTORY HAS FOUR EX-CHIEFS OF STATE IN RESIDENCE: ARANA, PERALTA, YDIGORAS, AND AREVALO. (THE FIFTH LIVING EX-PRESIDENT, JULIO CESAR MENDEZ MONTENEGRO, COULD RETURN AT WILL, BUT PREFERS TO TEACH IN MEXICO.) IN A COUNTRY, AND A REGION, WHERE PRESIDENTS THROUGH MOST OF HISTORY WERE ASSASSINATED OR BODILY EXPELLED, THE FACT SAYS SOMETHING FOR GUATEMALA'S STEADFAST ROTATION IN OFFICE SINCE 1945 AND INCREASING ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH SOME CIVILIZED RULES OF THE GAME.

2. HOWEVER, NOT ALL IS SWEETNESS AND LIGHT AMONG THE FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVES. ARANA AND PERALTA ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE CURRENT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN, ARANA BEHIND THE SCENES IN AN ATTEMPT TO BROKER A NEW CENTER-RIGHT ALLIANCE AND ENSURE THE DEFEAT OF THE
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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, PERALTA AS THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE OF THE MLN PARTY. WELCOMED BY SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE AT THE AIRPORT MAY 8, PERALTA IS OFF AND RUNNING, BUT YDIGORAS - WHOM PERALTA OVERTHREW AND EXILED IN 1963 - HAS MADE IT CLEAR HE HAS NO INTENTION OF FORGIVING HIS SUCCESSOR. IN NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS AND PAID ADS, HE HAS CALLED PERALTA AZURDIA A TRAITOR AND IMPUGNED HIS SEXUAL MORES,

FINANCIAL PROBITY, AND EVEN HIS RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS.
(PERALTA IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE PERSONALLY ORDERED 29
GUATEMALAN LEFTISTS SHOT AND TOSSED OUT OF AN AIRPLANE INTO
THE PACIFIC IN MARCH 1966.) AN ANTI-PERALTA EDITOR CLAIMS HIS
CAMPAIGN IS BEING FINANCED BY RIGHT-WING CUBANS IN MIAMI.
YDIGORAS, AND OTHERS, ARE REGARDED AS CERTAIN TO CHALLENGE
IN THE COURTS PERALTA AZURDIA'S ELIGIBILITY TO RUN FOR
PRESIDENT, AS ALL FORMER PRESIDENTS ARE BARRED FROM EVER
RUNNING AGAIN. PERALTA REPLIES THAT HE CALLED HIMSELF
"CHIEF OF GOVERNMENT", NOT PRESIDENT, AND ANY WAY THE 1965
CONSTITUTION HE PUT INTO FORCE SHOULDN'S APPLY RETROACTIVELY.

3. THE CAMPAIGN IS WARMING UP.
BOSTER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: GUATEMALA
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, PGOV, GT, (PERALTA AZURDIA, ENRIQUE)
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